Halaqa: Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Topic: Would you like God to love you?



**“But your Sustainer says: ‘Call unto Me, [and] I shall respond to you! Verily, they who are too proud to worship Me will enter hell, abased!’”**

**Ghafir (40): 60**

We all want to be loved by God but how can we obtain God’s love with a certainty of the feeling within myself?

The fact that I want to be loved by God is an indication that God loves me

* How? When I realize that my desire for love is given to me by my Creator, it is a sign that my God loves me because the feeling is from him.

In every moment, you are with God.

When you are happy with a new object, and you realize that the feeling is an interaction between you and your Creator, the object itself is a sign that the Creator loves you (and enjoys for you to be happy.)

*First part of the verse says*: Call unto me (invoke God) and I will respond to you

* What does it mean that God responds to us?

We tend to disregard this verse by thinking:

* I pray for a pay raise but I don’t get it. I claim that God is not responding to what I want.

How then can I be convinced (as this verse states) that God responds to me to my every call?

Rather, the recognition of whom you are asking is the response that is being referred to in this verse.

* When you are asking God (it is not about the objects you are asking for) but the very act of asking,

My humanity is always yearning meaningful satisfaction

* But, if I reduce my relationship with the world to material transactions, I am reducing myself to animalistic tendencies
* As humans, we have been given consciousness (human qualities), and have to use it.
	+ If we don’t use it, we will only be able to enjoy our existence in this world temporarily
	+ Human nature, however, yearns for eternal satisfaction
		- We should not ignore this human nature that we have been given

When I eat an orange, it is not just to satisfy my physical self

* It is a symbol from the Creator
* The Creator of the orange made it to tell me about His Absolute ownership and wisdom

I cannot deny my need for the orange but I cannot reduce my existence to just the orange

* I have to read the orange as a message to me
* By connecting myself to the Eternal Creator through my physical desire for the orange, I am in the presence of the Eternal
	+ Otherwise, what is the point of all my desires?
	+ The whole universe becomes meaningless

Human are endowed with the qualities to ask for meaning. When I am aware of it, everything becomes meaningful. If I ignore it, I am reducing my existence.

When I ask for an orange, I am asking for the mercy, wisdom, power, knowledge of the Creator of the orange.

* If you love the orange with the consciousness of the maker, you get a response immediately
* You become aware of the Creator

Even if you don’t get the orange, it doesn’t matter because simply in your desire (of the orange) is an opportunity to know the Creator.

*In your calling upon God, lies the response.*

We are used to understanding invocation as asking God for something ‘physical’. He answers only when he gives me what I want.

* This is not prayer. This is bargaining.

**Prayer is acknowledging your reality.**

* As soon as you call (express your desire and acknowledge the owner of that which you are seeking), you are with your Creator.
	+ The ability to recognize that everything is from your Creator, is the response in and of itself

If I cannot confirm this verse while I am here, how I can be a believer?

We should stay away from referring to the hereafter as something that happens after we die because it creates a culture of escapism.

At the core of belief is the importance of knowing who we really are. Unfortunately, we don’t value ourselves and aren’t really aware of our human values

Stop cheating ourselves by not paying attention to the capacities we have been given

* We have been equipped with such a deep capacity to know things
* Even if you have the whole world, it will not satisfy you
	+ You desire something beyond it
	+ Why?
* Everything is telling you about its Creator and showing you signs about your Creator
* The more you know yourself, the better you know the reality of this world and who your Lord is
	+ Otherwise, your belief is just an act of repetition
* Reflect on yourself see how you are able to see His existence within your own life.
	+ As soon as I realize that I have an owner and He is given me all my desires and is the only One sustaining me, I am with my Creator

If you call Him, you are with Him.

* You will not be left to your own devices but will be with your Owner (you aren’t an orphan)

*Second part says*: Those who are too proud, will enter Hell

Hell = the most terrible situation in which you are deprived of everything

* You think you are drinking water to quench your thirst but instead your thirst increases

How do we know that people who don’t worship God will be in Hell, as the Quran says? They seem to be happy as we see them in this life, enjoying their activities.

In not recognizing your owner, you are left alone and are here in this world just waiting to die.

* Your existence is meaningless
* You happen to be here with no purpose and no conscious wisdom behind it
	+ Why bother about anything if you are going to eventually die?
	+ Meaninglessness = Hell

If I am happy with the Creator of the orange (not the orange itself only), it is a sign that the Creator of the orange is happy with me.

* The Creator of the orange is the One who takes care of me
* If I do not acknowledge that I am happy with the Creator of the orange (my happiness is only with the object itself), it means that although He loves His creation, you are disconnecting yourself from Him

It is we who cut ourselves of from God and put ourselves in Hell.

We are put into paradise, due to God’s mercy.

The Quran describes Hell as being filled with human beings and stones (meaninglessness)

* We are the ones who make our existence into a Hell by declining my relationship with the Creator, Sustainer, Provider
* Kufr= disbelief= disconnection

Belief = connection

* If you connect yourself to the Eternal Source, you are in His presence
* If you disconnect yourself, you are in darkness

We have to understand the Quran as our existence in this life

* We have to experience it now
* Accordingly, confirm or reject the news
* If I don’t confirm the fundamental of belief matters presented in the Quran, and claim to be a believer, I am cheating myself

How can we make belief practical?

For example: When we eat, eat with the awareness that it is He who is entertaining me.

* Saying Bismillah: In His name am I benefitting from this meal
	+ You get a glimpse of paradise through your meal

Whatever comes (or doesn’t come) is from Him

* Khayrihi wa sharihi minAllah

*When I acknowledge the Creator of the orange, I am in His presence*

* *NOT when I have the orange.*

Your knowledge about orange tells you that for an orange to come into existence requires Absolute knowledge and Absolute wisdom.

* Even without the orange, you are able to acknowledge that the Creator is Absolute
* Your awareness and recognition of the Creator is ALWAYS with you

We are not here to eat the orange but rather to acknowledge the qualities of sustaining, knowledge, power, wisdom in the orange itself.

* This is what worship really means
* Worship should not be reduced to performing 5 daily prayers
* Belief is something we experience and are in connection with AT EVERY MOMENT
	+ *Dhikr=* remembrance, all the time

Even if you are not given the orange, belief means that you will know that the Creator of the orange is Absolute, Eternal and All-powerful.

* Orange IS merely a means to recognize the creator
* Whether I get it or not, isn’t the point
	+ I have been given the motivation to get an orange, so search for the orange
	+ He created me with the need for the orange BUT whether I get it or not, my awareness of the Creator of the orange will connect me to the Absolute Source
	+ Whether he gives or not, we should see the wisdom in it.
		- However, if I fail to see the wisdom, it is my failure. The orange is created by the perfect One and the One who is All-Wise.

By being with God, I am at peace because I am not going to go into annihilation

Analogy:

Guy A likes girl B.

Girl B sends a love letter to Guy A.

While Guy A does not even see Girl B, he gets happy just reading the letter.

Why?

Because the letter carries a message of love coming from Girl B.

Similarly, everything in creation is like a letter. It carries a message from the Creator, about the Creator.

**026.079**





**026.080**





**026.081**





**026.082**





* **“Who has created me and is the one who guides me,**
* **and is the one who gives me to eat and to drink,**
* **and when I fall ill, is the one who restores me to health,**
* **and who will cause me to die and then will bring me back to life-**
* **and who, I hope, will forgive me my faults on Judgment Day!”**

**Shu’ara (26): 79- 82**

Guidance: Being aware of who you are and who made you

What is the Source of the guidance?

Where did you get the need to ask about the source of your existence?

Where do all these existential questions come from?

They are all innately hardwired within us so that we may find answers to these questions.

These answers will inevitably lead you back to the One who created you with the questions.

Always return the qualities, reasoning capacity within you to its Creator. You cannot create anything.

The One who creates you, guides you.

What is judgment day?

*Yawm-ud-din:* When the truth of everything becomes apparent

* If you conclude in a perfect way
* By giving me the ability to remember my shortcomings (my mistaken way of understanding), is forgiveness within itself

Within the confession of your mistake is forgiveness.

The more you are aware of your mistake, the more you can be sure that you are forgiven.

Don’t fool yourself with wishful thinking by saying that I hope for forgiveness when you are not really aware of your mistakes.

I have been given the hope for forgiveness.

We may not be able to really recognize our shortcomings and hence ‘hope’ for forgiveness.

* **and is the one who gives me to eat and to drink,**

It is not the water, but the Creator of the water that is quenching you.

Through the story of Abraham, we are being guided on how we should think

I know I shouldn’t do something bad, but I do it anyway

I know I shouldn’t argue with my mother, but I do it anyway.

* I argue because of my weakness and my obstinate nature

We have to train our free will to choose the right option

* It is a process
* If God did not want to forgive you, why would He give you the awareness that what you are doing is wrong?
* We should not forget the human weakness is also innate within us
	+ We have to acknowledge our weakness and in that submit ourselves to God.

Example: I am wasting my time and not paying attention to His ownership

* The moment I realize I am wasting my time, that is an opportunity to acknowledge my weakness

**Think of sinning in terms of awareness of your Lord, not in terms of actions only.**

**002.186**



“**And if My worshippers ask you about Me – behold, I am near; I respond to the call of him who calls, whenever he calls unto Me: let them, then, respond unto Me, and believe in Me, so that they might follow the right way.”**

Baqara (2): 186

First

He is with us. We just have to call unto Him.

**Narrated Abu Huraira:**

**“Allah’s Messenger said, “Allah said, ‘I will declare war against him who shows hostility to a pious worshipper/close companion (Waliy) of Mine. And the most beloved things with which My slave comes nearer to Me, is what I have enjoined upon him; and My slave keeps on coming closer to Me through performing Nawafil (prayer or doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory) till I love him, so I become his sense of hearing with which he hears, his sense of sight seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he grips, and his leg with which he walks; and if he asks Me, I will give him, and if he asks My Protection (refuge), I will protect him; (i.e. give him My Refuge) and I do not hesitate to do anything as I hesitate to take the soul of the believer, for he hates death, and I hate to disappoint him.”**

In your realization, and acknowledging your reality, you realize that the hand with which you are holding, is His act of creation.

* You experience God in your own life depending on your level of realization

In order to move a single hand, it needs a Creator who controls the whole universe

* You are aware that the movement of your hand is an act of creation
* You are immersed in God’s presence

When you do something nice, you are aware that it is NOT you who are being nice but you are being created to be nice

* It is not me who is nice but my creator who is nice
* It is not me who is feeding the baby, but the creator who is feeding
* It is not me who is kind, but the Creator who is kind

When you love something, it is God who is loving it

* Your love is the sign of God’s Absolute love
* Don’t own it
	+ It belongs to the Creator
	+ We are all Created.

Concentrate on your existence and become aware that everything you have is NOT from you but from you Creator

* You will be a *shahid* (witness) of the Creator
* We have been given the ability to be a witness
* Use it and experience it

Belief has to become your own.

If you are the friend of God, you will never experience death (annihilation) because you are always with the Eternal One.

**Death: Transferring of one type of existence to another**

We don’t like transience and going into non-existence

* He says: I am not going to give you transience or send you into annihilation
* With the realization of your Creator, you will realize that your death has nothing to do with annihilation.

As far as you are concerned, the existence of YOU yesterday is dead.

* But if you realize that your Owner is the Absolute owner of everything (with no time limitation), you realize that your yesterday is not dead BUT with him.

The physical death will take place but the person will never experience the pangs of death because he is sure of the eternal existence

* Let God decide which form of existence He wants to give you

**The fruit of *iman* is eternal happiness**.

He will not disappoint you if you are aware of His Eternal qualities.